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Classics

# The Classical Outlook

*Continuing Latin Notes*

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ALCESTIS AT MARYGROVE COLLEGE, DETROIT, MICH. CONTRIBUTED BY SISTER MARY JEROME

## LUCIAN THE SATIRIST

BY HENRY MILLS GELSTON  
*Buller University, Indianapolis*

The times are ripe for the revival of satire. The Graeco-Roman world of the second century could offer no more striking contrasts and contradictions than America offers today. The welter of untested theories of state and society,

the conflict of opinions, the changing standards, the clash of class struggle, rugged individualism versus the commonweal, the mania for speed, the appalling crop of automobile fatalities, politics and the merit system, whiskey and gasoline, and modern bathing attire as street costume summon the shades of Lucian.

The story of Lucian comes largely from his own pen. His childhood was spent at his birthplace, the frontier post

of Samosata on the Euphrates. This place he refers to and to his mother tongue as barbarian. No doubt caravans often stopped there. One can easily picture camels laden with costly wares, and their swarthy drivers, lithe and sinewy men of the desert. Many a versatile Greek trader also came that way. Strange stories of distant lands spurred the imagination of the precocious lad and stirred within him in early years the longing for travel.

Lucian relates his choice of a career in the "Dream," a speech which he prepared to give his fellow townsmen on his return home after gaining fame and fortune. His father had apprenticed him to an uncle, a worker in stone. The lad's ability to model horses, cows, and men realistically with the wax scraped from his writing tablets had induced his parents to believe that their son had genius. But the apprenticeship was short. He carelessly broke a slab of marble and was flogged. The story is trivial, but it may indicate the sensitiveness to plastic beauty and to painting so often found in Lucian's writings.

In some way he found the opportunity of visiting one or more of the centers of learning, and of acquiring the arts of the rhetorician and the advocate. He read extensively the literature of classical Greece and gained such mastery of the language that he spoke it with great fluency and distinction. Not content with this success, however, he turned to literary art in a new field and became the creator of the Satiric Dialogue. His skill is well shown in the "Resurgent Philosophers," in which he replied to the anger of the schoolmen whom an earlier dialogue, "Philosophies for Sale," had provoked. A horde of angry shades from Hades had received a day's furlough in order to accuse Lucian before an Athenian court. He was acquitted, however, when he proved that he had ridiculed many recent pretenders and not the old philosophers. The defendant maintained that he was a consistent hater of deceivers, a hater of cheats, a hater of liars, and a hater of rascals in general.

Another reply to his critics is the "Double Indictment." Two imaginary lawsuits involve Lucian. Lady Rhetoric accuses him of base ingratitude and desertion after she has trained and raised him to fame and riches, and Dialogue charges him with treachery and maltreatment. The sustained dignity of the Platonic dialogue has been exchanged for the comic mask, and boisterous wit and rhythm no longer permit noble prose or verse. Here we have glimpses of a changing and growing literary career.

Lucian's reputation for keen observation has recently been strengthened by the remarkable discovery of an ivory statuette of Apollo in the Athenian agora.<sup>1</sup> The almost perfect figure, when the many fragments had been put together, agrees so completely with Lucian's description of an Apollo at Athens as to confirm its identity. Lucian describes the Apollo as leaning against a column, as holding a bow in the left hand, and as resting the right hand on the head. A rough spot on the left shoulder of the statuette probably marks the place where it touched the column. The fragments include the base of a column. The position of the fingers of the left hand indicates that it once held a bow loosely, while the god rested after shooting, and the right hand is relaxed and rests on the top of the head.

With critical eye Lucian praises the famous Lemnian Athena for her delicate cheeks and finely proportioned nose. Notable also is his comment on Myron's Discus-thrower who "stoops in the attitude of one who is making a cast, turning around toward the hand that holds the quoit, and bending the other knee gently beneath him like one who will rise erect as he hurls the quoit."<sup>2</sup> From these and other references it is clear that his interest in details did not obscure his accurate appraisal of the perfected work.

Exuberant wit and extraordinary narrative gifts, with a

very responsive imagination, have given to Lucian's satire a quality of interest seldom matched. The impossible and ridiculous are made to appear reasonable and actual by his serious manner, and he holds the attention and beguiles the reader. Behind his mask, however, there is often a sincere desire to uncover shams and hypocrisy. Then as now, profession and practice were often far apart, and the proclaimed followers of certain philosophies and creeds repeatedly were the targets of Lucian's shafts. Sometimes he indulges his wit at the expense of friends, and again he is bitter without reason.

In the dialogue, "Philosophies for Sale," Zeus presides while Hermes auctions the philosophers. First on the block is a Pythagorean, whose knowledge of arithmetic, astrology, fraud, geometry, music, and quackery, and lastly the art of the soothsayer, wins a ready buyer and the good price of ten minas. Others follow in quick succession, and our amusement and interest never wane. A Cynic, disgusting in dress and in manners, sells for a pittance, and a Cyrenaic, drunk and on pleasure bent, fails to sell at all. Two talents, however, are paid for the Academic who explains that ideas are the essence of all things. The sale of a Stoic proves very amusing when the absurdly high-sounding terms and the hair-splitting logic of his philosophy are brilliantly exposed. A Peripatetic draws a laugh and twenty minas, since "he will tell you at once how long a gnat lives, how far down into the sea the sunlight reaches, and what the soul of an oyster is like."<sup>3</sup>

His skepticism and suspicion do not permit Lucian to stop with the exposure and condemnation of the fallacies of current thought. The invisible and supernatural he views with unbelief and derision. The established conceptions of Greek deities and superstitions about gods and men are continually the butt of harsh and bitter satire. A very interesting example is furnished by the "Gods in Council." They have assembled to settle the question of precedence, as a result of many embarrassing situations. The eligibility of half-breed gods to sit with properly pedigreed deities is also considered. Dionysus is in question because his mother was not an immortal and because with him came a crew of coarse creatures — Pan, Silenus, and the Satyrs. After prolonged debate an elaborate bill is drawn in proper legal phrase, requiring all the gods to register with a board of duly qualified commissioners. Thereafter every one must confine himself strictly to his own profession. Asclepius must stick to medicine; Athena is forbidden to heal the sick without a license; Apollo must choose between prophecy, music, and medicine. Finally philosophers are commanded never to invent meaningless names nor to talk nonsense about matters of which they know nothing.

Brevity does not accord with further reference to Lucian. It is enough to say, however, that he is worthy of many more English readers, for whom his works are now easily accessible in excellent translation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>T. Leslie Shear, *Archaeological Notes*, *A. J. A.*, XL, 403-404.

<sup>2</sup>H. Stuart Jones, *Ancient Writers On Greek Sculpture*, page 69, No. 93.

<sup>3</sup>A. M. Harmon, *Lucian With An English Translation*, (Loeb Classical Library), II, 505.

## NEW IDEAS FOR CLASSICAL CLUBS

BY LILLIAN B. LAWLER  
Hunter College

"Give me something new for my Classical Club!" is the cry of Latin teachers all over the country. I have often wondered if it might not be a good idea for the high school Latin teacher to try, for a semester or for a year, a reorgani-

zation of her classical club on the basis of "hobbies." In other words, each pupil might be asked to indicate his especial hobby or field of interest, and to direct his classical club activities particularly into that field. If a student has no hobby, he might be encouraged to seek one. Various members of the club would become in this way "experts" along certain lines for the club activities; and meetings could be planned so that each special interest would have a share of the club time during the term. Such an organization would amount to a term project in classical civilization, with provision for individual differences; and it should prove of absorbing interest.

If a student shows an interest in stamp collecting, for instance, he might stress Italian and Greek stamps. He might bring them to club meetings, and show them. He would watch for any mythological or classical symbols, pictures of statues, etc., and would be ready to interpret them to his fellow-students. In stamps of other countries, he would watch for Latin mottoes or classical objects. He would be particularly interested in such special issues as the Vergilian, Horatian, or Augustan stamps of the Italian government. If a student collects coins, he could interpret to the club any Latin mottoes or symbols; he would explain such money terms as *d.*, *dinar*, *lira*, *£*; he could study the history of Roman coinage. He might even have one Roman or Greek coin of his own; if not, he might clip pictures of ancient coins from coin catalogues or old books, and explain them to the club.

Students who like drawing or painting could cooperate with other "experts" in making posters or charts; they could make drawings of statues, scenes, etc., from classical antiquity; they could make reports on ancient art; and they could take the club to local museums of art and explain the influence of classical art and mythology on modern art. If a pupil's hobby is handwork, he might make the usual models of ancient objects. If a girl enjoys paper dolls, she might make a complete set to illustrate Roman costume. If another girl likes sewing, she might work out the same costumes in fabrics. If cooking is her hobby, she might study Roman food and meals, try some ancient recipes, and make bright charts of Roman food stuffs. If a boy likes athletics, he may study Greek and Roman athletics, and perhaps may even lead the club in staging an athletic pageant at the end of the school year.

Music students like to study ancient music and musical instruments, to look up the derivation of musical terms, and to point out classical themes in modern music. The boy or girl who likes to read may be directed to a wealth of historical novels, to Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome" and similar poems, or even to interesting Roman and Greek writers, in translation. Such "experts" will report to the club from time to time, telling of what they have read. Some pupils like to write; these may be asked to write poems, stories, or plays on classical themes. Pupils who like dramatics will take the lead in club dramatizations. Pupils who enjoy photography will cooperate with the handwork "experts," taking pictures of their models. They may also take pictures of architectural details of classical inspiration on local buildings.

The boy who enjoys travel will be set to collecting pictures of Mediterranean lands from travel folders and from newspapers and magazines. He will probably wish to make an attractive scrapbook of his imaginary "trip to Rome." If postcards from Italy and Greece can be obtained, he may be custodian of them for the club. He may succeed in getting townspeople who have been to Italy to speak before the club. The boy who enjoys adventure stories or even detective fiction will also enjoy archaeology. He may be directed to popular works on the subject, and to magazine articles on recent excavations. At club meetings he will occasionally talk on "Adventures in Archaeology."

Such a hobby club might continue for more than a school year. Ideas begun in one year might be amplified in another; and various combinations of pupils with similar interests might result in effective projects of lasting value.

## THE PROBLEM OF ENROLLMENT IN LATIN

*A brief talk given by Orville C. Pratt, President of the N.E.A., at the annual meeting of the American Classical League, June 30, 1937*

The fact that enrollment in Latin, along with that in all foreign languages is decreasing, is indisputable. All that is necessary to establish that fact is to consult the statistics on subject enrollments in secondary schools. The problem, pertinent not only to all teachers of Latin, but also to all those who believe in its great cultural value, is what, under the circumstances of decreasing enrollment, ought to be done.

Culture, as I view it, is perspective. It is bringing to bear on a present life situation the sidelights of a knowledge and appreciation of things distant in time or space. It is the enrichment of present life by a thorough understanding of how things as they are came to be.

Such cultural value Latin possesses in unusual degree. When one looks at the calendar it means more to him if he understands that July was named for Julius Caesar, who, in dictator fashion, arbitrarily took a day from February in order that the month named for him might be as long as any other. His nephew and successor, Augustus, not to be outdone, likewise took a day from February. Thus, these two ancient Mussolinis reach down through the centuries to affect our calendar. Multiply that and kindred knowledge by a thousand and we begin to see our lives in perspective.

More than half of our English vocabulary is derived either directly or indirectly from Latin. A word, in origin, is like a newly minted coin. It has a clear-cut picture in which the meaning is evident. But as the inscription on the coin may be worn smooth, so the original picture of which the word was an expression may be lost sight of in the course of time. To have that original picture restored is both interesting and culturally enriching.

Latin teachers need to do what teachers of science and mathematics have done — namely, present the cultural values of Latin in a textbook intended for only one year's work. What ought such a book to contain? Whatever from Latin that still lives in modern America. There is ample material for such a book and there can be no doubt as to its cultural value.

Latin as such along traditional lines will long continue to be taught, but the enrollment in such classes will doubtless continue to decrease. The whole present trend of progressive education in emphasizing the here and now fore-shadows this result. New subjects are forcing an entrance and Latin has to give way, even though slowly. But in the form which I have suggested, it would have a strong appeal and would preserve indefinitely its highly cultural values.

## REAL LATIN TO REAL BABES

By SISTER M. LILLIANA OWENS, S. L., PH. D.  
*St. Mary's Academy, Denver*

In *The Classical Bulletin* (XIII, 12) under the caption "Latin in the Grades," we read: "Can *real* Latin be taught to *real* American babes? It is almost too good to be true . . ." To this question we would answer "Yes, it can be done." *Real* Latin has been taught to *real* American babes at St. Mary's Academy, Denver, Colorado, during the year 1936-1937.

At the beginning of the school year, September, 1936, Sister Ancilla Cole, S.L., began the teaching of Latin to her first and second grade babes. The little girls soon recognized Latin as a means of communication and wanted to express themselves in this "new found" tongue. By

Christmas they were able to give, in Latin, a little program composed of Latin versions of the following selections: "Good Morning to You"; "Early to Bed"; "Little Miss Muffet"; "The Sandman"; "Santa Claus"; "Baby has a Sheep"; "To the Little Girl Rose"; "Christmas Carol"; "Jesus, I Love Thee"; "Come Little Jesus"; "Baby Jesus"; and "Silent Night." These songs may be found in *Latin for the Six-Year Old American Child*, and *Aural-Oral Latin for the Second Grade*, both by Sister Mary Immaculate, S.N.D., M.A.

Sister Ancilla Cole, S.L., based her first work upon the text *Latin for the Six-Year-Old American Child*. She found that the aural method advocated by Sister Mary Immaculate is a very good one, but she is convinced through the laboratory method that the visual method must also be employed. Accordingly she set about compiling a little book which she has called *My First Latin Reader*. Each word in this little book has a picture to correspond wherever this is possible. The pictures are made in silhouettes. The book is one of the most cherished possessions of the little first grade Latin students at St. Mary's. Sister Ancilla Cole preferred to test out still further the visual method with the aural before making the little reader into a permanent form.

In the Latin grade room the pupils have kept a bulletin board. Mottoes done in letter cut-outs have been made and pinned upon the cork surface of the board. These mottoes are left on the bulletin board for about fourteen days in order that the constant sight of them may fix the words in the minds of the children.

On March 6 and 7, 1937, *ex ore infantium et lactantium* came forth a Latin dramatic production, *Tres Ursi*. In order to correlate the Latin work with the dramatic art work the little "Latinists" made marionettes to act the parts of *Pater Ursus*, *Mater Ursa*, *Infans Ursus* and *Parva Puella*. The children spoke the Latin words and pulled the strings while their clever little puppets did the acting.

With the author of the article "Latin in the Grades," we are convinced that "Latin is not too difficult of mastery in the grammar grades."

## ANACREONTIS CARMEN XI. DE SE IPSO

BY FRANCES REUBELT  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Girls say to me, "Anacreon, look in thy mirror there.  
Thou art an old man, poet dear, thy head is growing bare."  
How looks my head, how looks my brow, if locks no longer  
grow,

This is a thing I cannot say because I do not know.  
But this one truth I know quite well and it is clear to me,  
The nearer death to old age comes, the merrier it should be.

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A meeting of interest to Latin teachers will be held at Atlantic City in connection with the annual conference of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 27. The Latin section, which is under the direction of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, will begin at 10:30 in Haddon Hall. A copy of the program may be obtained from the chairman of the program committee, Professor James Stinchcomb, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.—Mildred Dean, *Washington, D. C.*

Teachers who are able to visit the League Service Bureau quarters are cordially invited to do so. The hours are in accordance with University office hours, which are 9-5 week-

days, 9-1 on Saturdays, except in summer when the building is closed on Saturday.

Teachers and groups of pupils also are welcomed at the Bureau. In addition to its usual exhibits the Bureau now has on permanent loan splendid models of Roman shops, a Roman farm, an aqueduct, etc. By writing to Miss Latta, arrangements can be made for short talks accompanied by lantern slides. Special permission can be obtained for opening the Bureau for groups which could not come at regular times.—D.P.L.

Dr. G. Stewart Nease, head of the Department of Classical Languages in Alfred University, Alfred, New York, writes: "It has been a decided source of encouragement this summer that almost all of the Alfred graduates in Latin of this year, as well as those of the past three years who have not yet secured situations, are now placed in teaching positions. Several times as many found places this year as have done so in any preceding year for a long time. Not only that, but a substantial number more positions were secured in Latin than in any other subject. One student was employed to re-introduce Latin into a school which had tried the experiment of dropping it." It is with great satisfaction that we add this to the growing file of heartening letters received by the American Classical League.

The Junior Classical League continues to thrive and grow. Teachers are finding it a way to arouse enthusiasm for the civilization of Greece and Rome to which we owe so much. Not only students of Latin enroll but also those who are studying mythology or world history in the grade schools. The teacher makes the organization of a local chapter fit the needs of that place. The gold pin is attractive and small with a laurel wreath surrounding the letters J. C. L. and a torch. Pins, accompanied by a membership card signed by the President and Secretary-Treasurer of the American Classical League, are 30 cents each.

The Italian Tourist Information Office, 626 Fifth Avenue, New York City will send free of charge an attractive colored poster of the Colosseum and the column of Trajan. Two other posters of Venice and Naples are available but they do not show exclusively classical monuments.

## AMERICAN CLASSICAL LEAGUE SERVICE BUREAU

DOROTHY PARK LATTI, *Director*

The American Classical League Service Bureau has for sale the following material. Numbering is continued from the October issue. Complete catalogue available, 20 cents postpaid. Please order by number.

555. The Haunted House. 3 scenes. 9 characters (2 girls, 7 boys). An adaptation of Pliny's letter Bk. 7, 27, telling a ghost story. It brings in the burial customs of the Greeks and Romans. Good for any time, especially Hallowe'en. Any year. 15-20 minutes. 10 cents.

556. The English Pronunciation of Latin Proper Names in Caesar's Gallic War. Prepared by W. L. Carr. 10 cents.

The following material previously published is also available from the League Service Bureau:

Supplement I. The English Pronunciation of Proper Names in the First Six Books of the Aeneid. By E. H. Sturtevant. 10 cents each; 30 or more, 5 cents each. Pamphlet 19. Pronunciation of Greek and Latin Proper Names in English. By Earl LeV. Crum. 10 cents.

A free list of material for holiday programs such as Hallowe'en, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, etc., for sale by the Service Bureau, may be secured by writing for it.